

Message Text

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20

ACTION EA-14

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NSAE-00 RSC-01 SNM-02 SY-10 TRSE-00 USIA-15 NSC-10

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R 210640Z JAN 74

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9319

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 790

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR

SUBJ: VISIT OF AMBASSADOR HANDLEY

REF: STATE 009783

1. SUMMARY. DURING JANUARY 17-20 VISIT TO HONG KONG, AMBASSADOR HANDLEY MET WITH CONSUL GENERAL, POST NARCOTICS COORDINATING COMMITTEE, AND HONG KONG COMMISSIONER OF NARCOTICS NORMAN ROLPH. DISCUSSIONS WITH ROLPH INDICATED PROBABILITY OF CONTINUED CLOSE US-HONG KONG RELATIONSHIP ON DRUGS AND ROLPH'S OWN TINTEREST IN ANOTHER US-UK-HK MEETING, VISITING US, AND CONTINUED EXCHANGE OF INTELLIGENCE. END SUMMARY.

2. IN MEETING WITH CONSUL GENERAL AND WITH NARCOTICS COORDINATING COMMITTEE, CONGEN HAD OPPORTUNITY TO BRIEF AMBASSADOR HANDLEY FULLY ON CURRENT SITUATION IN ANTI-NARCOTICS EFFORTS IN HONG KONG AND, IN TURN, TO HEAR FROM AMBASSADOR CURRENT SITUATION IN WASHINGTON AND WASHINGTON VIEW OF INTERNATIONAL SITUATION. DISCUSSIONS CENTERED ON CURRENT HONG KONG GOVERNMENT (HKG) EFFORTS AND ANTICIPATED CONTENTS OF WHITE PAPER ON NARCOTICS SCHEDULED TO BE RELEASED NEXT MONTH.

3. IN LENGTHY CONVERSATION WITH ROLPH, AMBASSADOR DREW UPON SUGGESTIONS IN REFTEL. ROLPH INDICATED CONTINUED INTEREST IN
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TRI-COUNTRY (US-UK-HK) MEETINGS AND EXPRESSED HOPE FOR MEETING

FOLLOWING GENEVA UN COMMISSION ON NARCOTICS CONFERENCE IN FEBRUARY. ROLPH INDICATED THAT HE WOULD ATTEND AS WOULD CHRIS TRAIN FROM UK AND THEY WOULD PLAN TO GET TOGETHER WITH US DELEGATES AT LEAST INFORMALLY. ROLPH ALSO INDICATED PREFERENCE FOR SUCH TRI-COUNTRY MEETINGS OUTSIDE OF HONG KONG SINCE ANY SUCH MEETING HELD LOCALLY WOULD LEAD TO CONSIDERABLE COVERAGE AND SPECULATION IN LOCAL PRESS.

4. ROLPH ALSO INDICATED INTEREST IN VISITING US, POSSIBLY IN LATE JUNE OR JULY AS PART OF ANTICIPATED SHORT HOME LEAVE. HE ACCEPTED AMBASSADOR HANDLEY'S INVITATION TO ASSIST IN ARRANGING SCHEDULE IN US AND STATED HE WOULD NOTIFY AMBASSADOR THROUGH CONGEN WHEN PLANS MORE DEFINITE.

5. ON WHITE PAPER, ROLPH SAID HE WAS DISAPPOINTED THAT PRINTING DELAYS WILL NOT PERMIT ITS BEING AVAILABLE PRIOR TO END OF FEBRUARY AND POSSIBLY EARLY MARCH. HE PREDICTED LITTLE DIFFICULTY IN HAVING EXECUTIVE COUNCIL APPROVE PAPER AND THOUGHT IT WAS A COMPREHENSIVE DOCUMENT. ON PARTICULARS, HE MENTIONED ONLY STATISTICAL TABLES ON SEIZURES, ARRESTS, AND COURT CONVICTIONS FOR LAST TEN YEARS. ROLPH INDICATED THAT ANTI-NARCOTICS LAW ENFORCEMENT IN HONG KONG WAS ABOUT AS EFFICIENT AS POSSIBLE AND EXPRESSED THE OPINION THAT SOMETHING WOULD HAVE TO BE DONE AT THE SOURCE (THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE) TO IMPROVE THE SITUATION IN HONG KONG. WHILE INDICATING THAT CONSIDERABLE EMPHASIS WILL BE GIVEN IN WHITE PAPER TO TREATMENT REHABILITATION, THERE REMAIN CONSIDERABLE PROBLEMS IN THIS FIELD TO PROVIDE THE NECESSARY FACILITIES TO MAKE MUCH OF A DENT IN HONG KONG'S DRUG POPULATION, WHICH HE NOW ESTIMATES AT 100,000 PERSONS.

6. ON PRC, ROLPH NOTED THAT HE HAD NO INFORMATION OF PRC INVOLVEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL TRAFFICKING AND HIS SOURCES INDICATE THAT DRUG ADDICTION HAS BEEN LARGELY ELIMINATED FROM CHINA. HE DID ACKNOWLEDGE PRC OPIUM PRODUCTION FOR MEDICAL AND RESEARCH PURPOSES UNDER GOVERNMENTAL CONTROLS, BUT CONSIDERED SUCH PRODUCTION WAS WELL CONTROLLED.

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